

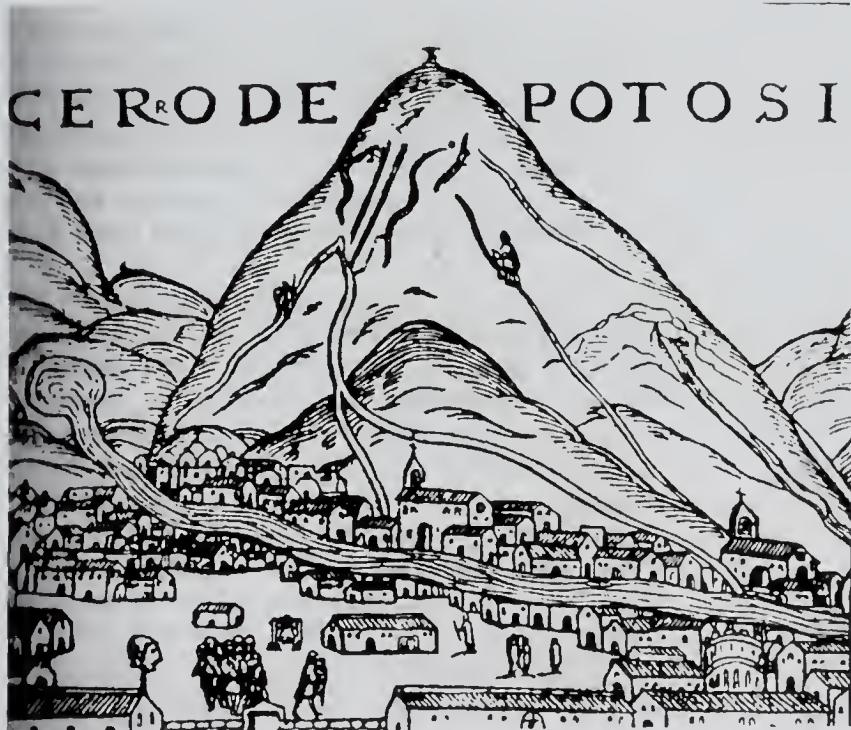
THE ASYLUM

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“If anybody would make me the greatest king that ever lived, with palaces and gardens, and fine dinners, and wine and coaches, and beautiful clothes, and hundreds of servants, on condition that I would not read books, I would not be a king—I would rather be a poor man in a garret with plenty of books than a king who did not read.”

THOMAS B. MACAULAY
1800–1859

The Asylum

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Front cover: The Spanish colonial town at Potosí (from P. Cieza de León, *Crónica del Perú*, 1554).



A Tribute to Humberto Burzio

Alan Luedeking

Humberto F. Burzio is arguably one of the greatest Latin American numismatists of all time. His contributions to numismatics are extensive, ranging far beyond the realms of Spanish Colonial and Latin American coins and medals for which he is so justifiably famous. For instance, he also wrote a seminal treatise on naval themes in ancient Roman coinage, stemming from his profound knowledge of history in general, naval history in particular, and coins. Universally admired as a scholar and a gentleman of impeccable character, he was beloved by his friends and later in life acclaimed worldwide for his erudition and accomplishments.

Burzio was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1902. He entered the Argentinian navy and soon distinguished himself, rising eventually to the rank of frigate captain. He was always fascinated by the role of the sea in the development of Western civilization, and upon retirement from the Navy he soon became renowned as a scholar of naval history and historical cartography, and as an astute collector of coins and medals. His significant contributions in any one of these fields would suffice to secure his legacy for posterity.

For roughly thirty years the great cauldron of numismatic scholarship that was Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century slowly cooled and nearly ceased to exist. Gone were the giants José Toribio Medina, Alejandro Rosa, Bartolomé Mitre, and Enrique Peña, and with their passing the fires of numismatic scholarship were nearly extinguished. Not until 1940 did Humberto Burzio stir the embers and set the cauldron bubbling again, with the publication of his first book on the medals of the border dispute between Argentina and Chile, an acclaimed work of great historical and political insight and numismatic significance. This was followed by his groundbreaking work on the colonial coinage and mint of Potosí in 1945, entitled *La ceca de la villa imperial de Potosí y la*



Humberto F. Burzio

moneda colonial, which brought him instant worldwide recognition as a numismatic scholar of the first order. Almost simultaneously in 1945, he published a 600-page reference on the medals of the Argentinian navy.

Burzio was instrumental in reviving several of the nearly dormant numismatic and historical societies of the past and served in various capacities as an officer in several of them, not only in Argentina. Burzio was a founding and honorary member of the Sociedad Iberoamericana de Estudios Numismáticos (SIAEN), still today one of the most prestigious international numismatic societies, based in Madrid.

In 1947, at a small Sunday gathering of intellectuals in Santiago, Burzio was introduced to the numismatist Alaimiro de Avila Martel, and a great friendship was born. This Chilean connection led, in 1952, to an invitation to Burzio from the Fondo Histórico y Bibliográfico José Toribio Medina to write a book he had long been thinking about. With almost inconceivable energy and erudition, he set about completing this work for them, and the Fondo Histórico published it in Santiago between 1956 and 1958, in three folio-sized volumes. The last of these, published first, consists entirely of photographic plates. Burzio named his opus *Diccionario de la moneda hispanoamericana*. It is an in-depth encyclopedia of Latin American numismatics, richly illustrated throughout both text volumes with beautiful line drawings carefully executed by Burzio's talented sister, Genoveva María.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of Burzio's contribution to numismatics with this work. Scholars of the Spanish world found themselves turning to the *Diccionario* again and again for facts or historical background, and even today, after nearly fifty years, almost no significant research in the field of Latin American numismatics can be undertaken without repeatedly referring to it. Burzio's *Diccionario* can rightfully be considered one of the greatest numismatic works ever written in any language.

Burzio dedicated his *Diccionario* to the great José Toribio Medina, a numismatist he much admired, and whose corpus of works is considered the foundation for much of Latin American numismatic scholarship today. With the *Diccionario* Burzio did full justice to his mentor's memory. Burzio ceded all his rights in this work to the Fondo Histórico y Bibliográfico José Toribio Medina, who very quickly recouped their expenses in publishing it and thereafter proceeded to make a handsome profit on it. Burzio was pleased by this and continued his researches, producing in 1958 his seminal work on the mint of Lima and its coins, entitled *La ceca de Lima, 1565–1824*, yet another masterpiece of numismatic scholarship.

Burzio was soon showered with accolades and awards from many numismatic and historical societies in Spain, France, Britain, and the Americas, none of which mattered much to him. His chief delight came from meeting with friends and holding lively discussions on all aspects of history, philosophy, and numismatics. In 1960, the American Numismatic Society in New York made him an honorary member and bestowed upon him its Archer M. Huntington Award, the society's highest honor, as did the Asociación Numismática Española, which bestowed on him its Premio Javier Conde Garriga.

Burzio always considered coins and medals to be faithful historical documents—as important as any paper, parchment, or canvas; their careful study opened doors to a vast expanse of knowledge that might otherwise not exist. This understanding led him to publish, in 1961, the scholarly work on the navy in ancient Roman coinage that I alluded to earlier. This book was an enlargement upon an earlier work for a lecture he'd been asked to give. In this lecture he had put forth the premise that the influence of marine power in the formation of the Roman empire was undeniable and the deeply rooted conviction of its importance in the ruling classes made it possible that the city of Romu-

lus should extend itself all over the ancient world, with the consequent vigorous expansion of Latin culture, which, amalgamated with that of other peoples, formed today's Western civilization. In the prologue to this work he expressed the sentiment that he would be most satisfied as an author if the words of Ming-Siu-Pao-Kien would come true for his readers, that "every time I open a book I learn something."

As if this weren't enough he then found time to research and write his huge three-volume work on the history of the Naval Academy of Argentina, as well as his excellent study on the cartographic medal of Sir Francis Drake, and then a book about the history of the torpedo and its ships in the Argentinian Navy from 1874 to 1900!

When, in 1978, the Organization of American States launched its international O'Higgins competition, the Chilean National Academy of History put forward his name as a juror. Burzio was elected and later was recognized for his attention to detail and the precision of his study of all of the books presented for the competition. It is difficult to imagine how Humberto Burzio managed all this while also serving for some time (with great distinction) as Argentina's ambassador to Perú, serving as first vice-president of the Brownian Institute in Argentina, serving for a quarter century variously as treasurer and vice-president of the National Academy of History, as director of the National Historical Museum of Buenos Aires, as president of the renowned Buenos Aires Institute of Numismatics and Antiquity, and as the founder of the Department of Historical and Naval Studies of Argentina.

In 1980, Burzio chaired a committee preparing for the VIth International Congress of the Americas on History, and began assiduously cataloguing thousands of medals of the city of Buenos Aires in preparation for the celebration of its fourth centenary. The long hours and grueling overwork finally overcame him, and Captain Burzio died suddenly in the early hours of August 18, 1980. The fruits of his last labors were published posthumously in April 1981, in a huge three-volume elephant folio work bound in cream linen covers with taupe dust jackets.

On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his passing, as a small tribute to Humberto Burzio, I have prepared a small listing of those of his works that have appeared at auction, primarily in George Frederick Kolbe's sales. It follows herewith. I hasten to remind the reader that this is by no means a comprehensive list of Burzio's works. It represents but a small fraction of his total output. For a much better overview of

his numismatic works, I refer the reader to Jorge N. Ferrari's excellent bibliography of Argentinian numismatics, *Bibliografía argentina numismática y medallística*, published by the Academia Nacional de la Historia (Buenos Aires, 1977).

BURZIO'S WORKS AT AUCTION¹

Burzio, Humberto F. *Medallas del litigio de límites argentino-chileno. Numismática IV.* Buenos Aires: Instituto Bonaerense de Numismática y Antigüedades, 1940. 93, (1) pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Small quarto, black quarter morocco, gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	612	125	unsold
	Kolbe 62	June 10, 1995	754	75	45

Burzio, Humberto F. *La ceca de la villa imperial de Potosí y la moneda colonial.* Buenos Aires, 1945.

This work consists of the "Introducción" of the same title, having 100 pages numbered i-c, and 297, (7) pages, + 4 folding facsimile document plates, and 23 plates of coins. Quarto.

The original complete edition is of 1300 numbered examples. There is an authorized offprint of 200 numbered examples specially issued for Instituto Bonaerense de Numismática y Antigüedades as issue number LXXXVIII of the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas. Most listings do not distinguish the two editions, nor, in the case of the offprint edition, mention if the "Introducción" is included, which it sometimes is not, when the volumes were bound separately.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
#32 of 200. (The offprint). Missing foldout plate, three-quarter morocco.	Kolbe 5	June 9, 1979	125	100	
Hardbound crimson cloth.	Kolbe 7	June 13, 1980	81	275	
Brown quarter calf, gilt.	Kolbe 38	Dec. 10, 1988	381	125	
#9 of ?; russet buckram, gilt.	Kolbe 42	Dec. 10, 1989	330	125	140
Dk. green ¼ morocco, gilt, silk marker, cc bound in.	Kolbe 57	Dec. 12, 1993	87	200	250
#083 of 200. (The offprint). Polished blue quarter calf, spine decor. & lettered in gilt.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	614	200	180

¹ This listing covers only Kolbe's sales through 1997. The reader is encouraged to complete it!

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Blue buckram, orig. printed front card cover bound in. [Presumably the orig. ed., but apparently lacking the 100-page Introducción.]	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	692	175	110
Green half leather, gilt. [Presumably the orig. ed., but apparently lacking the 100-page Introducción, and lacking 1 of the 4 fold-out document facsimiles.]	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	693	125	90
#175 of 200. (The offprint). Lacking the 100-page Introducción. Brown half calf, spine decor. & lettered in gilt. Inscribed & autographed by the author.	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	132	200	240
#1221 of 1300. The orig. ed., incl. the Introducción. Blue cloth, gilt, ex-Ray Byrne. [F.]	Kolbe 71	Dec. 6, 1997	239	175	225
#134 of 200. (The offprint). Half red leather & cloth, gilt, raised bands.	Lake 59	July 31, 2001	E21	350	266

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Historia numismática de la Armada argentina. Premio "Almirante Brown" del Centro Naval (Bienio 1939-1940); Buenos Aires, 1945.*

(2), xxv, (1), 600, xliii (1) pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Tan cloth, orig. cc bound in. cc.	Kolbe 13	Dec. 12, 1982	62	75	
Quarto, cc.	Kolbe 32	Dec. 13, 1987	77	100	
Dark green quarter morocco, gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 47	May 3, 1991	628	100	120
	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	613	150	100

Burzio, Humberto F.; *La moneda primitiva del Perú en el siglo XVI. Discurso de Incorporación como Académico de Número de la Academia Nacional de Historia; Buenos Aires, 1947.* 30 pp., illustr.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Orig. cc. F.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	615	25	75
Blue quarter calf, decor. & lettered in gilt, init. JOM at base of spine; orig. printed front cc bound in.	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	133	50	100

Burzio, Humberto F. [and] Zabala, Rómulo, [and] Pardo, Román F.; "Monedas de la Provincia de Mendoza acuñadas en 1823 y 1824" (Coinage of the Province of Mendoza Minted in 1823 and 1824.) [Separata de 30 ejemplares...]

(2), blank leaf, 87-118 pp., 2 plates. Offprint of 30 copies for the Instituto Bonaerense de Numismática y Antigüedades, of article originally in ANS Museum Notes II, 1947.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
16mo. Orig. cc.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	616	25	40

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Discursos"; Separata del Boletín XXII del año 1948, de la Academia Nacional de Historia; Buenos Aires, 1949. 39, (5) pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Sm. 4to. Black quarter morocco, gilt, orig. printed cc. bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	617	45	30
Black quarter morocco, gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. Title inscr. by author. [VF.]	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	134	50	70

Burzio, Humberto F.; "La moneda de la tierra y de cuenta en el régimen monetario colonial hispano-americano"; Madrid, 1949. 34 pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Orig. printed cc.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	618	25	50
orig. printed wrappers, worn, discolored.	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	135	50	60

Burzio, Humberto F.; "La moneda metálica"; Buenos Aires, 1949. 46, (2) pp., illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Dark green quarter morocco, gilt; orig. printed cc bound in.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	619	45	50

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Dr. José Marcó del Pont. Homenaje de la Academia Nacional de Historia a su ex-Presidente en el centenario de su nacimiento." Buenos Aires, 1951. 21, (3) pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Small quarto; Black quarter morocco, gilt, orig. printed cc. bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	620	45	30
	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	136	50	unsold

Burzio, Humberto F.; "El oficio de ensayador en América, en el período hispánico"; [Offprint from Numisma]; Madrid, 1952. (4), 65-77, (1) pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Quarto; plain brown cloth. Inscr. by author to Dr. Jorge N. Ferrari.	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	137	35	50

Burzio, Humberto F. & Colomer, Jaime; "Ensayo de un catálogo universal de medallas de los Reyes católicos y descubrimiento de América"; Separata de Numisma, Año III, Núm. 7, Madrid, 1953. (4), 115-278, (2) pp., illus. [Offprint.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Dark green quarter morocco, gilt; orig. printed cc bound in. Inscribed by author [which one not specified.]	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	622	75	70

Burzio, Humberto F.; "La marina en la moneda romana"; Buenos Aires, 1953. 27, (1) pp., illus.

[A lesser version of a later more comprehensive work of the same title. See entry for 1961.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Dark green quarter morocco, gilt; orig. printed cc bound in. Kolbe 62	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	621	45	unsold

Burzio, Humberto F.; "La bandera de los pozos"; Buenos Aires, 1954. 23, (1) pp., illus.

[Of unknown numismatic content; not in Ferrari.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	623	45	unsold

Burzio, Humberto F.; *La casa de moneda de la villa imperial de Potosí*; Buenos Aires, 1954. 32 pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
16mo. Orig. printed cc.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	624	25	60

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Las piezas numismáticas encontradas en Santa Fé la Vieja (Cayastá), han sido batidas con anterioridad a 1660*; Buenos Aires, 1954. (2), 17, (1) pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Green quarter morocco, gilt; orig. printed cc bound in.	Kolbe 61	Dec. 10, 1994	625	45	60

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Proyecto de escudos para los territorios de jurisdicción marítima"; Buenos Aires, 1954. 15, (1) pp., illus.

[Of unknown numismatic content.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Dark green quarter morocco, gilt; orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61 Kolbe 62	Oct. 10, 1994 June 10, 1995	626 757	45 30	unsold 18

Burzio, Humberto F.; "La medalla cartográfica de Francis Drake"; Buenos Aires, 1955.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Orig. printed cc.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	627	25	unsold
	Kolbe 62	June 10, 1995	758	15	10

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Sarmiento y la marina de guerra"; Buenos Aires, 1956. 16 pp.

[Of unknown numismatic content.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61 Kolbe 62	Oct. 10, 1994 June 10, 1995	628 759	45 30	unsold 18

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Diccionario de la moneda hispanoamericana*;

I: Letras A a LL. Santiago, 1958. xix, 327, (3) pp.

II: Letras M a Z. Santiago, 1958. 453, (5) pp.

III: Láminas. Santiago, 1956. (6) pp., 116 plates. All quarto.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
3 vols., cc.	Kolbe 5 Kolbe 7 Kolbe 9 Kolbe 17	June 9, 1979 June 13, 1980 June 12, 1981 June 9, 1984	126 82 342 452	85 75 75 100	
3 vols. bound in 2; matching brown buckram.	Kolbe 42	Dec. 10, 1989	331	125	105
3 vols., cc.	Kolbe 45	Oct. 16, 1990	588	150	110
3 vols., matching red cloth.	Kolbe 47	May 3, 1991	477	150	185
3 vols., first 2 matching red cloth, plate vol. cc.	Kolbe 47	May 3, 1991	642	150	175
3 vols., cc.	Kolbe 54 Kolbe 54 Kolbe 57	Dec. 13, 1992 Dec. 13, 1992 Dec. 12, 1993	102 103 88	150 150 175	180 180 120
3 vols. bound in 2; Matching red cloth, gilt.	Kolbe 60	Oct. 15, 1994	382	175	185
3 vols., matching tan quarter calf, decor. in blind, black & crimson spine labels, gilt, red silk markers.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	629	250	170
3 vols., orig. printed cc, trifle worn; unopened.	Kolbe 62	June 10, 1995	1187	125	150
3 vols., Red cloth, gilt.	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	269	200	170

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
3 vols., orig. printed cc, trifle worn; unopened.	Kolbe 71	Dec. 6, 1997	240	175	130
3 vols., bound in 2. Matching tan half morocco, gilt, bindings trifle rubbed. Ex-Fairleigh Dickinson Univ.	Kolbe 71	Dec. 6, 1997	241	250	200

Burzio, Humberto F.; *La medalla y el escudo a los libertadores de Montevideo, 1814*; Buenos Aires, 1957. 36 pp., 10 plates, text illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Orig. cc.	Kolbe 69	June 9, 1997	188	25	35

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Almirante Guillermo Brown (síntesis biográfica)*; La Plata, 1957. 30 pp., 6 plates. [Of unknown numismatic content.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Original brown cloth, gilt.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	630	45	unsold
VF.	Kolbe 62	June 10, 1995	760	30	18

Burzio, Humberto F.; *La ceca de Lima 1565-1824*; Madrid, 1958. 186, (2) pp., 20 plates, 8 facsimile document plates.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Brown speckled leather, gilt, silk marker, orig. printed front card cover bound in.	Kolbe 57	Dec. 12, 1993	89	75	110
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	631	100	120
Tan full leather, decor. in blind, red morocco spine label, gilt, blindstamped inner dentelles, orig. cc bound in.	Kolbe 68	Dec. 7, 1996	138	125	160

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Armada nacional, reseña histórica de su origen y desarrollo orgánico*; Número extraordinario del Boletín del Centro naval; Madrid, 1960. 281, (5) pp., illus. [Of unknown numismatic content.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	632	75	unsold
Inscribed.	Kolbe 62	June 10, 1995	761	50	30

Burzio, Humberto F.; *La marina en la moneda romana*; Buenos Aires, 1961. 179, (5) pp., illus.

[A much more comprehensive version of an earlier work of the same title. See entry for 1956.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61 Kolbe 62	Dec. 10, 1994 June 10, 1995	633 762	100 65	unsold 35

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Museo Histórico Nacional*; Buenos Aires, 1962.
43, (5) pp., illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	634	45	60

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Historia del torpedo y sus buques en la Armada argentina 1874-1900*; Buenos Aires, 1968. 580, (20) pp., illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Orig. printed cc. Inscribed.	Kolbe 61 Kolbe 62	Oct. 10, 1994 June 10, 1995	635 763	45 30	unsold 18

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Régimen monetario en el período colonial"; *Historia argentina* 28; Buenos Aires, (1968). 1893-1960 pp., illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	636	75	110

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Régimen monetario entre 1810 y 1930"; *Historia argentina* 60; Buenos Aires, (1968). 3715-3756, (2) pp., illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. Burzio's calling card affixed to first page. Inscribed. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	637	75	100

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Manifiesto de la plata extraída del Cerro de Potosí (1556-1800)*; ??, 1971. ?? pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
[In large bulk lot.]	Kolbe 69	June 9, 1997	255	[50]	[95]

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Historia de la Escuela Naval Militar. Tomo I-III: Libros I-IX*. Buenos Aires, 1972. Three volumes: 757, (3); (6), 767-1410, (2); (6), 1419-1882, (2) pp., ext. illus.

[Limited numismatic content.]

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Quarto. Matching black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed cc bound in. Inscribed. VF set.	Kolbe 61 Kolbe 62	Oct. 10, 1994 June 10, 1995	638 764	250 150	unsold 80

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Francia en la medallística argentina"; Offprint of *Gaceta numismática*, Número 37; Barcelona, 1975. 59-80 pp., illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed wrappers bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61 Kolbe 62		June 10, 1995	765	30 18

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Cartografía histórica de la Antártida, siglos XVI al XIX. Catálogo descriptivo*; Buenos Aires, 1976; (48) pp.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Orig. printed cc., stapled.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	640	25	unsold
Duplicated typescript.	Kolbe 62	June 10, 1995	766	15	unsold
Orig. printed cc., stapled. Duplicated typescript. [Together with Augustin Ross' Chili 1851-1910. Soixante Ans de Questions Monétaires..., Valparaíso, 1911.]	Kolbe 63	Oct. 14, 1995	497	[50]	[27]

Burzio, Humberto F.; "Invasiones inglesas al Rio de la Plata, en 1806 y 1807. Medallas de una gesta hispano-criolla"; Offprint of *Gaceta numismática*, Número 44; Barcelona, 1977. 93-122 pp., illus.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
Black quarter morocco, spine decor. & lettered in gilt, orig. printed wrappers bound in. VF.	Kolbe 61	Oct. 10, 1994	641	45	120

Burzio, Humberto F.; *Buenos Aires en la medalla. Tomo I-III*; Buenos Aires, 1981.

Description	Sale	Date	Lot	Est.	Pr. (\$)
3 vols. Orig. matching white linen, dustjackets.	Kolbe 47	May 3, 1991	629	250	350

SOURCES

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- Numismático Buenos Aires, Año XVIII, No. 73, pp. 51-52, Buenos Aires, Aug. 1990.
- Burzio, Humberto F. *Diccionario de la moneda hispanoamericana*, Vol I, p. viii-xix. Santiago: Fondo Histórico y Bibliográfico José Toribio Medina, 1958.
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Where Are They Now? Regarding Ron Fern . . .

Jeffrey LaPlante

The United States Mint facilities produce all of forty million coins daily, and they also finish and package these coins. The Mint has in place one of the finest quality-control systems in the world, but try as they might, errors are produced at these manufactories, and much to the chagrin of management, some of the errors are released into circulation.

For generations, collectors of United States coins dismissed these error coins as unwanted junk, considering them to be less desirable than normally struck issues. It wasn't until the 1960s that error coins started to attract a following; it was the birth of a new coin-collecting genre by the numismatic community. Clubs were formed to trade and sell these irregular but interesting pieces, and magazines were established to study these oddities and freaks. Since then, the premiums attached to error coins have risen dramatically. Concurrent with this rise in value, serious researchers have been able to determine exactly how each type of error coin is produced and, in so doing, have revealed much about the minting process in general. It is one of these early pioneers that I want to introduce you to today.

In the late 1950s an exuberant collector by the name of Ron Fern entered the fantastic world of coin collecting. Ron's father had a friend who traveled the world, and he had brought some coins back for Ron when he was a young lad. It was at this time that Ron was smitten by the coin bug, and he began visiting the local mom-and-pop coin shops in southern California. He recalls, "I took the local bus downtown and visited the coin shops. This was when I was about 12-14. The shops were much smaller back in the mid to late 1950s, even in a large city like Long Beach, California. They were 'Mom and Pop', not like many of the larger ones of today. The owners were willing to spend time showing their stock and answering questions."



Ron Fern in earlier years, with Alan Herbert.

In the late sixties Ron was employed by McDonnell Douglas, and he later worked at Boeing, eventually retiring in 2002 from the aerospace industry after over thirty-four years as an industrial engineer and technical specialist. It was around 1968, while working there, when he purchased his first error off a bid board, and after doing some research found he had bought an acid-treated quarter. This has happened in one form or another to all of us collectors; I know it's happened to me and probably you too—live and learn, as they say. But Ron was not the type to repeat his mistakes, so after his initial trial by fire he purchased a copy of *CoinAge* magazine. This particular issue of *CoinAge* had an article sandwiched somewhere between the covers that contained excellent information and the whereabouts of a local error club called OCNEC (Orange County Numismatic Error Collectors).

OCNEC was about to hold a meeting in the Santa Ana, California, library and Ron found out about it from that magazine article. This was a fortuitous moment for the hobby and also for Ron, because that meeting changed his life in ways he could not even know at the time. Ron became a numismatic error collector and one of the hobby's greatest proponents at this meeting. It was here he also met Don and Evie Wallace. Don was the owner of the Wallace Trade Bindery, and he invited Ron to the bindery for the next weekend to help print *ErrorScope*. Today,

ErrorScope is the club magazine of CONECA (Combined Organization of Numismatic Error Collectors of America), but back then it was the brainchild of the original NECA (Numismatic Error Collectors Association). Within a month Ron was the assistant editor and later (within a month or two) he became the full-time editor of Errorscope. The Wallace Trade Bindery was not just the printer for ErrorScope; it was also the printer for excellent resource material such as *The Design Cud* by Mort Goodman. This book was first published in 1969, contained 135 pages, was spiral bound and serial numbered, and cost \$3.00. At the time, it was the most comprehensive and informative study ever made on a single numismatic error, including a complete photographic listing of every known modern cud error along with a great many type coin, foreign, and other cuds. It also contained a complete chapter on values.

In a recent email I asked Ron about that time at the bindery and he said, "Back in this time period, we used a mimeograph machine. The ErrorScope was printed over a weekend. Prior to the monthly printing, I spent close to 40 hours reviewing articles, proof reading, and cutting stencils for preparation of the printing. We spent the day from about 9AM to 5PM, and returned the following day to complete the collating, stapling, and addressing of the publication." It was also at the Wallace bindery where Ron met Fred Weinberg. Fred was still in high school at this time and Ron was 25, and a lifetime friendship was formed. Ron went to his first Error-A-Rama in Anaheim, California, in 1969; it was held at a theater across from Disneyland. Ron attended many Error-A-Rama's in and around Los Angeles and southern California, eventually promoting the event along with Lonesome John (Devine), and Fred Weinberg, and serving as the table judge during the event.

In the early 1970s Ron became involved with Civil War tokens and their associated errors and varieties and other numismatic errors. He began to write articles on unique and strange varieties and oddities. Ron joined a coin club in San Diego called SDEC (San Diego Error Collectors) and one in Hollywood, ECOH (Error Club of Hollywood). Fred ran for Vice President of ECOH, and Ron ran for President. Both were elected and served with distinction. It was also at this time that Ron became a member of the Numismatic Literary Guild, doing research and writing. Then he opened a mail-order business in 1976, called CAL

ERRORS. He accomplished all of this while working his regular job as an engineer at McDonnell Douglas.

In the mid-1970s Ron was invited up to Lonesome John Devine's along with Fred Weinberg. The three set about discussing errors and varieties. Ron would meet Fred at his North Hollywood home, and they would trade off driving on alternate times to Newbury Park. They would spend the weekends with the Devine family, working at the coin shop and print shop organizing errors and processing orders. This is where Ron and Fred really learned a lot of valuable information and got to see some really neat errors. The evenings were spent at the Devines' home, with meals being provided. Ron said, "Peg is a great cook and we really enjoyed that food. We also had a lot of time to see all the things John and Peg collected. There were old bottles, insulators, skulls, animal traps, and all sorts of antiques they found on their trips to the desert."

In the 1980s Ron took up coin shooting, or metal detecting, and he bought a four-wheel-drive vehicle, added a CB radio, and got into visiting Nevada ghost towns (with John and Peggy Devine). Ron told me a story about how he and the gang visited an old Chinese railroad camp they found in southern Nevada. Ron said, "You could actually see where they dug out the side of the mountain to put their tents. There were old railroad spikes, bits of pottery, blasting powder cans, old metal toys, buttons, and Seated Liberty dimes; we had even found a small cache of them near one of the camps." It was also about this time that the CONECA folks decided it would be smart to include the east coast of the United States in all of the fun, so it was decided to move Error-A-Rama to the east.

The whole gang took a cross country trip to Error-A-Rama 1984 in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. It started at John and Peg's second home in the White Mountains, near Lonesome, Nevada, and then from there they went to Lake Tahoe for a coin show at the old Harvey's Inn. On the way the group stopped at the Carson City airport and picked up Dr. Lyndon King. The retired doctor was a hoot to be with, according to Ron, and he was from South Dakota, a real western cowboy doctor: "Must have been 80 by then. Took tons of pills along with his nightly cocktail. I was assigned the "wake-up" duty for the doctor, because he used to take a good couple of hours to get started in the morning. If you

mentioned the TV program, “60 Minutes”, or a special illness he was familiar with as a MD, he’d talk for hours! Meals on the road headed from NV to NJ were a chore. The doctor took about fifteen minutes to salt and pepper his food. We were all finished as he was just starting to eat.” Ron told the story with a hint of the rascal and a gleam in his eye.

The 1990s found Ron doing coin shows and gun shows on weekends and mini-vacations. He would usually split a table and share the expense with three or four different dealers. They all did shows in CA, AZ, and NV. A lot of contacts and friendships were formed with fellow dealers that would last a lifetime. Ron was usually the “designated driver”. Two of his fellow dealers were about twenty years his senior, and both liked to drink scotch to wind down after the day’s show. It sometimes was hard getting them to finish up and head for the motel room for the night after dinner and drinks... they both had so many stories to tell. One of them claimed to have had Gregory “Pappy” Boyington save him prior to the start of World War II. Ray Hastey was a fighter pilot who got shot down over China and backpacked out muleback to escape—can you believe it?

I emailed Fred Weinberg and he told me, “I first met Ron one Saturday (at the bindery), where he had come up from Huntington Beach where he lived, and we all spent those Saturday’s for a few years having a lot of fun, getting to know each other and talking about error coins while we printed, collated, stapled, and mailed out the Errorscope.” Fred went on to say that Ron’s sense of irony and quick wit always gave him a chuckle. These two have been friends for years and our hobby seems to have this effect on folks. I believe Ron and Fred would agree that and would encourage all new coin collectors to have fun and make friends.

Ron was an authenticator for CONECA, and he continues to be an examiner of error coins for the club. After Ron’s retirement from Boeing in 2002 he and his lovely wife continue to operate a space at the Pomona Antique Center, selling antiques, collectibles, and coins. He still visits two coin shops weekly and offers coin related items, including errors, on the bid boards. Ron is also a starring member of Allexperts.com, where he is the resident expert answering all questions relating to US coins, tokens, and currency. Ron Fern, with over 55 years experience in coin collecting, is a member of the ANA, CONECA, CWTS,



Bonnie and Ron Fern.

and NLG. He won the Best Numismatic Author of the Year award from the NLG for his monthly articles and also a first place at EAR for Civil War tokens. You can ask Ron a question and he may share his numismatic knowledge with you at

http://en.allexperts.com/q/Coin-Collecting-2297/indexExp_112577.htm

Additional Catalogues from the Wylie Hoard?

Dave Hirt

In the late 1970s and early '80s, Frank and Laurese Katen sold the Wylie hoard of numismatic auction catalogues. It was a huge hoard of almost 5000 catalogues, dispersed over a period of four years.

Recently, while looking through a Depression-era mail-bid auction sale held in Chicago by Koin-X-Change on February 20, 1934, I came across a rather amazing group of auction catalogues offered. The consigner was listed as Northern Illinois, which would fit Wylie, as he was from the Weaton area.

In all over 1400 catalogues were offered. Unfortunately they were lotted into large lots, most of 100 pieces each. There were no dates or dealers listed, although each lot did give the range of years in the lot (examples: 1863-1897, 1859-1904). Only one lot offered a bit more information, however I will let my readers try to figure out the description: "1883-1912 Famous Coltns. Lge. coin auctions", estimated at \$0.50 each. Most of the other lots were estimated at \$0.10 each. My catalogue is not priced, so I am not sure what these lots brought. It would be interesting to know who bought them.

However, a sale of catalogues at that time and in that area makes me think the catalogues may have been from the original Wylie hoard.

A Little Dry Reading for the Antiquaries (Part Three)

Joel J. Orosz

The first article written under this title issued from the facile pen of Edouard Frossard, to commemorate—or, more accurately to eviscerate—the orthographic awfulness of S. Hudson and Henry Chapman’s 1881 catalogue of the great Charles Ira Bushnell sale of coins, medals and tokens (see Frossard’s *Numisma* for July 1882). Frossard took the Chapmans to task for printing typos such as “uncirculated.” The author of the present article used the title for a second time to mark the myriad, and maladroit, misspellings of the Abraham Lincoln Coin Company, in their 1993 sale of the estate of G. Coster (see “The Printer’s Devil” in the Fall 1993 issue of *The Asylum*). Despite being named for the great Emancipator, the company’s catalogue was not free of errors, such as listing the Stack’s sale of the great “Amos” Carter coin collection. Now, for the third time (which, alas, will prove to be no charm), the title will be applied, this time for blunders that can be described only as bodacious, in Sanford J. Durst’s *Numismatic News* advertisement of August 3, 2010.

Sanford J. Durst is a figure of long standing in the field of numismatic literature, notable chiefly for his prolific reprints of assorted numismatic classics. The general quality of these emissions puts one in mind of H. L. Mencken’s description of the rhetoric of Warren G. Harding, which, the great Baltimore newspaperman memorably concluded, was “so awful that a sort of perverse grandeur crept into it.” Be that as it may, one thing must be said of Mr. Durst: while it took the Brothers Chapman a 136-page catalogue to merit the first iteration of “A Little Dry Reading,” and the Abraham Lincoln Coin Company an 8-pager for the second, our hero earned the third iteration with a mere half-page, printed, no less, in *Numismatic News*’s micro-format. This is, any way you look at it, a hugely impressive demonstration of high efficiency in the service of utter futility.

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Buy all 3 for \$96.00 postpaid.	
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Danneunter, Early U.S. Gold Coin Varieties H.....	\$69.00
Garrison, Encyclopedia U.S. Gold Coins H.....	\$69.00
Bowers, Guidebook U.S. Double Eagles S.....	\$18.00

AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ART & HISTORY

Burdette, Renaissance of U.S. Coins Vol. I (1905-1908) H.....	\$65.00
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Buy the set of 3 (listed recent auction \$275) for \$159.00 postpaid.

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Vermeile, Numismatic Art in America II.....	\$30.00
Lange, History of the U.S. Mint & Coinage H.....	\$20.00
Van Ryzin, Crime of 1873 (Silver Mining Silver Dollars, Comstock Load) (was \$35) H.....	\$20.00
Buy all 4 for \$85.00 postpaid.	

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Bowers, Guide to U.S. Commemorative Coins (OOP) S.....	\$16.00
Slabaugh, U.S. Commemorative Coinage (OOT) H.....	\$15.00
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COLONIAL COINAGE

Mossman, Coinage of the American Confederation H.....	\$32.00
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Crosby, Early Coins of America H.....	\$50.00
Ryder, Copper Coins of Massachusetts S.....	\$8.00
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TOKENS

Doty, The Token, Americas (OOP) Other Money H.....	\$30.00
Low, Hard Times Tokens (The Basic Reference) S.....	\$20.00
Hibler / Kappan, So Called Dollars (New 2nd Ed.) S.....	\$19.50
Adams, United States Store Cards S.....	\$12.00
Fuld, Guide to Civil War Store Cards S.....	\$20.00

Buy all 5 for \$104.00 postpaid.	
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COUNTERFEITS & ALTERED COINS

Tuxay, Unofficial, Misstrade & Counterfeit U.S. Coins (OOP) S.....	\$17.00
Hancock, Standard Catalog of U.S. Counterfeit & Altered Coins S.....	\$25.00

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Sanford J. Durst

106 Woodcleft Avenue, Freeport, NY 11520

(P) 516-867-3333 FAX 516-867-3397

This advertisement like no other starts with a bang, offering up terms of sale that were apparently lifted from the Collected Works of Casey Stengel. No legalese or picayunish provisions here; and not a lick of comprehensible English, either. In fact justice can be done to it only by a verbatim quotation: "Subject Package Deals - Buy one or all (any single book (s) or over \$100 take off 10%; over \$200 take off 15%; over \$300 take off 20% - Don't forget postage see below.)" Many potential customers probably didn't make it this far, but for those hardy enough to wade through this run-on sentence, the aforementioned note below reads as follows: "Shipping - first book \$6.00, additional books \$3.00 each in USA. Foreign inquire." In truth, *all* interested parties might do well to inquire, for despite these intricate instructions on calculating costs for shipping, in the body of the ad itself, each of the fifteen packages of tomes on offer is clearly marked "postpaid." It seems to be the case, therefore, that Mr. Durst's putative customers have their choice of purchasing a single volume, or buying a group of books, or, selecting a pre-determined multi-volume set, any of which may be subject to charges for shipping, or alternatively shipped postpaid, or if you happen to live outside of the friendly confines of the United States, shipped in a whole 'nother method to be determined by Mr. Durst. As rules of engagement go, this one seems to have been inspired by the Jabberwock (just add "brillig in the slithey toves").

The transition from the terms of sale to the offering of the actual books brings no surcease to our sorrow, or for that matter, no surcease to our complete bewilderment. Immediately following the description of each volume is at least one capital letter, either an "S" or an "H." What on first glance appears to be a quixotic attempt to revive the lamented Sperry & Hutchinson Green Stamp franchise is in fact, according to Durst's helpful explanation, shorthand for bindings: the "S" denotes "Softbound" and the "H" "Hardbound." But what to make of the curious and completely unexplained designation "OOP" appearing after a dozen book descriptions? As much as the reader is tempted to interpret these as editorial comments on the ad inserted by the staff of *Numismatic News*, OOP is apparently meant to convey that the volume in question is "Out Of Print." Uncertainty persists, however, for the OOP designation is not applied to a number of books—such as Bowers and Ruddy on half cents—that are undeniably out of print. Oh well—or more apropos—OOP.

As distinctive as all of this is, it is in the matter of orthography that Sanford J. Durst ascends to the pinnacle of inadvertent genius, into a Zen-like state of oneness with the typo. Unaccountably, he begins with a burst of perfect spelling, correctly transcribing even such challenging names as Swiatek, Ehrmentraut, and Feigenbaum. Around the middle of the ad, however, the gods of the spelling bee turn suddenly wrathful, and the fun begins. One entry offers “Wooster’s” book on the gold coins of the “Dalonega” Mint, suggesting that P. G. Wodehouse’s Bertie Wooster somehow ghosted a volume for Douglas Winter on a mint located in a nonexistent Georgia city.

The sluice gates really open with the entry that reads: “Iaxing, U.S. Mint and Coinage (considered classic).” One can only ponder whether “considered classic” refers to the title in question, or to the bizarre misspelling of Don Taxay’s last name. A charitable reader would be tempted to say “at least he came close,” except that, in this instance, Mr. Durst got 60% of the letters wrong. This impression of less than punctilious proofreading is confirmed farther down the list, when Durst finds an entirely different way to misspell poor Taxay’s surname: “Tuxay, Unofficial, Misstrade & Counterfeit U.S. Coins (OOP)S.” Yes, (OOP)S indeed. The apparently casual blunder of “Iaxing” gives way to the obviously formal error of “Tuxay.” And what of “Misstrade”? The actual word in the title is “Misstruck,” which actually is a word, which “Misstrade” actually is not. How numismatic of Mr. Durst, when coining a word, to make it a mint error!

As long as we are giving Sanford his props, we might well laud the versatility of his inanity. He is at home with the straightforward orthographic miscue, rendering, for example, “Dannreuther” as “Danreuter,” and the “Comstock Lode” as the “Comstock Load.” He confuses Rick Tomaska and Mark Tomasko, listing the latter as the author of the former’s *Complete Guide to Franklin Half Dollars*. He displays real flair with more unusual constructions, such as this oddly bifurcated title: “Doty, The Token: America’s (OOP) Other Money H.” He leaves you wondering if Hibler/Kappan” is a peculiar concoction of a German dictator and an academic honorary society. And, if the mildly pornographic is your cup of joe, Durst delivers by transforming Virgil Hancock’s surname into the naughty “Handcock.”

It is, of course true, as Sanford J. Durst himself might note, that “misstrades will happen.” But when the errors come down faster than

"buy" prices on the typical bourse, and when they mistakenly imply everything from Phi Beta Kappa keys to onanism, this little ad becomes a candidate for "A Little Dry Reading for the Antiquaries." Should you find printed train wrecks strangely compelling, rejoice, for there is much more where this content came from. At the bottom of Mr. Durst's Numismatic News insertion, there is the following notice: "See our ad on paper money books in Bank Note Reporter, and on foreign/ancient books in World Coin News." If English words such as "lode" and surnames such as "Hancock" are too challenging for the Sage of Freeport to transcribe accurately, one can only imagine what words like "hacksilber" and names like "Dzhalaganiia" might do to Mr. Durst's transcription capacities. Can a fourth iteration of "A Little Dry Reading for the Antiquaries" be far behind?

Help Promote the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Howard A. Daniel III sets up a club table to represent the Numismatic Bibliomania Society (and the International Bank Note Society, Numismatics International, and the Philippines Collectors Forum) at both of the annual American Numismatic Association events, the Florida United Numismatists (FUN), and the International Paper Money Show.

The Asylum and NBS membership applications are given to numismatists interested in the society from the table. Journals and applications for the other societies are also given out.

There are also world bank notes and world coins to give to young and new numismatists in a packet which includes a consolidated membership application form for all four groups. References are given to numismatists but especially to teachers and scout counselors, for them to use with their students and scouts.

Howard always needs volunteers to staff the table and needs your unwanted references, world banknotes, and/or world coins. Please contact Howard at hadaniel3@msn.com to make the donation arrangements. The best method to get them to him is to take them to one of the three shows, otherwise, you can mail them to him. Howard can also send a thank-you letter to each donor which will document their donation for tax purposes.

“You Don’t Say”: Numismatic Quarterly Quiz

Myron Xenos

1. Where were the planchets obtained that were used to coin the 500 Confederate States half dollars?
2. What was the nickname of the cannon which appeared on some of the 1863 Civil War tokens?
3. “The Bank, to make the Spanish dollars pass, stamped the head of a fool on the neck of an ass.” The coin was a Spanish 8 reales. Name the fool and the ass.
4. In what year did the P mintmark first appear on coins struck at the Philadelphia mint?
5. What are the dates of the only US cents that did not display the word LIBERTY?
6. In the movie *Pearl Harbor*, Hawaiian overprint currency was seen being used. What is wrong with this picture?
7. What were the first commemorative coins to carry the motto “In God We Trust”?
8. What is a “Devil’s Head” note, and when and where was it issued?
9. The US silver dollars issued in 1836 were designed by which chief designer?
10. The first Secretary of the Treasury had the task of establishing the first US Mint. Who was the lucky guy?
11. Chinese imitation paper money is sometimes burned at funeral rites. What is the western nickname for this money?
12. Who is the infamous twentieth-century Mormon forger about whom the book *Salamander* and other books were written?

Answers on p. 93.

Fifty Years in a Numismatic Library: Address to the NBS Annual Meeting, 2010

Francis D. Campbell

Having been born and raised in the neighborhood of Washington Heights in upper Manhattan, the street game of stickball was a very important part of my early life. For those unfamiliar with the game, it is a form of baseball played with a rubber ball and a broomstick bat. The relevance of this to numismatic bibliography would be absolutely non-existent, were it not for the fact that the street on which we played was West 155th Street, between Broadway and Riverside Drive, the location of an early edition of the American Numismatic Society. Our playing field, which in days gone by was part of the John James Audubon estate, lay between two of New York's many great landmarks: Trinity Church Cemetery to the south and Audubon Terrace to the north. At our backs, just behind home plate, was Broadway. A few blocks east you would have found the old Polo Grounds, home of the baseball and football Giants. A bit further east, across the Harlem River was the House that Ruth Built, Yankee Stadium. So, we were in good company.

As many of you may know, Audubon Terrace was then the home of five world-renowned institutions, each housed in its own neo-classical building. These were the Hispanic Society of America, the American Geographical Society, the Museum of the American Indian, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the American Numismatic Society. Those of us playing stickball referred to this group collectively as "Duh Museum." So, while those inside these formidable buildings were probably discussing Goya's painting of the Duchess of Alba, Iroquois tomahawks, or Athenian dekadrachms, those of us outside were argu-

The author would like to thank the Massachusetts Historical Society for providing such a special venue for the meeting at which this talk was delivered.

ing as to whether the ball that bounced off the side wall of the Hispanic Society was fair or foul.

Little did I know at the time, that while still in my junior year of high school, I would be entering one of those neo-classic buildings as a part-time employee of the ANS Library. Nor would I have guessed that I would be its Librarian in 1975, following the retirement of Geoffrey H. North. The stickball player could never have expected that he would someday be assisting the likes of Samuel R. Milbank, Chairman of the Board of Wood, Struthers, Winthrop; Baldwin Maull, Chairman, Marine Midland Bank; or R. Henry Norweb, Sr., U.S. Ambassador to Peru—who all were members of the ANS Council. In short, I was growing up in the American Numismatic Society and I could not have had two better mentors than Richard P. Breaden and Geoffrey H. North, who preceded me as Librarians. Since the ANS publication *Numismatic Literature* was produced by the Library in those days, Geoff North allowed me to write abstracts and, in doing so, helped improve my writing skills. He also taught a rough-edged city kid how to interact with those of the business and academic worlds. Most importantly, at the end of a work-week, when he was planning a trip to Vermont with his wife Eileen, he would allow me to bring my homing pigeons to the library and he would release them in Vermont, from where they would return to my apartment window in Washington Heights. My gratitude to Geoff North is such that my son bears his name.

Since I was employed full-time during the summers, I also had occasion to meet successive groups of ANS Seminar students, many of whom have since taken on positions in academia or business. John Kroll, Thomas Martin, and Kenneth Harl are three who were later elected to the Society's Council. Visiting Seminar Scholars during those early years included Philip Grierson from Cambridge, Georges Le Rider of the Sorbonne, Tony Hackens from Brussels, and Michel Amandry from Paris. Over the course of my career, all four became good friends. Having the opportunity to work with members of an earlier curatorial staff (namely Margaret Thompson, Joan Fagerlie, George Miles, Henry Grunthal, and later Nancy Waggoner) was a great learning experience for me. Working with their successors and the present curatorial staff was also a great experience. One of those successors, Dick Doty, was soon snapped up by the Smithsonian and three others, William

Metcalf, Carmen Arnold-Biucchi, and Alan Stahl, as soon as they became free agents, were chosen to head the numismatic departments at Yale, Harvard, and Princeton. LeBron James, eat your heart out! So, as I went about learning the ins and outs of librarianship and the nooks and crannies of the Society, I was again in very good company.

When it comes to the nooks and crannies of the Society, believe me there were many. I often think that my longtime survival at the Society was due to the fact that Council felt nobody other than me knew where all the books were hidden. Rather than attempting to describe library locations that bore names such as "Swimming Pool," "Library Closet No. 1," "Reilly Room," and "Seminar Room," I will refer you to a full and amusing treatment of these nooks and crannies by another former curator and good friend, John Kleeberg, which appeared in the August 2008 issue of *The Colonial Newsletter*.

In 1978, shortly after becoming Librarian, I applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities, requesting funding for the compilation of a "List of Subject Headings for Specialized Collections in Numismatics." The application was successful and with funding provided by three grants totaling \$70,000, and extending down to 1987, the library edited and revised some 10,000 subject headings, as well as cross references and scope notes. We had thereby assured consistency in our own subject cataloging and provided a reference which other libraries could use. Although the Internet was not fully established at that time, our goal of assuring consistency in subject assignment went a long way toward assuring that present-day searchers of the Library catalog via the Web would have a highly successful hit rate.

Also in 1978, Harry W. Bass, Jr., who had been elected to Council in 1972, became the Society's President. Harry had been a member of the Library Committee since 1968 and worked closely with Geoff North to see that there was adequate funding for conservation of library rarities, renovation of library stack areas, and acquisitions. In 1980, Harry became Chairman of the Library Committee. He funded the initial software development for the library's ordering, accessioning, and cataloging system. He also funded the installation of moveable shelving, thereby increasing the Library's space by some 30%. So gradually we were modernizing our work setting and moving into the computer age. An exciting acquisition of this period came when the heirs of Henry

Chapman presented the Library with an extraordinary gift of Chapman auction catalogs, account ledgers, and other memorabilia. The gift included the original manuscript, galley proofs, page proofs, and bid book of the celebrated John Story Jenks collection, sold by Chapman in 1921.

This was a period during which the level of outreach activity also increased. In 1984, I contributed an article to the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* entitled "Numismatic Bibliography and Libraries." In 1985, I was elected Chairman of the Museums Council of New York City, and in 1991 I attended the International Numismatic Congress held in Brussels, participating in the session on Libraries and Bibliography and chairing a Roundtable on the same topic. A year later, I was invited, along with the ANS curator of Islamic coins, Michael Bates, to serve as a consultant for the *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* and assist with the development of their "Exchange Media" hierarchy. Robert Hoge, who was then with the ANA, and Dick Doty, then with the Smithsonian, were also invited.

An exhibit entitled "Treasures of the Library," mounted by the Library in 1987 in connection with the Society's Development Campaign, gave some indication of the rarities we possessed. The exhibit included fourteen works, but here I will mention just two of the unique items. These were the manuscript "An Essay on Coining" (1783), by the Dublin die sinker Samuel Thompson, which was apparently prepared in order to lend support to a coinage proposal. The hand-drawn illustrations in Thompson's work provide an invaluable record of contemporary minting techniques. Exhibit visitors were also provided the opportunity to view a truly historic document in the annals of early American coinage: the "Indenture" establishing Machin's Mill, a mint located in the vicinity of Newburgh, New York, which was active during the years 1787-1789. The mint was constructed by Captain Thomas Machin, a military engineer, and was used to strike copper coins, especially lightweight "imitation" English halfpence.

Acquisitions during the 1990s could easily have provided more than ample material for several more exhibits. The Library acquired an extremely important collection of source materials in June of 1990 when George Kolbe auctioned selections from the John W. Adams library. The acquisition was made possible by contributions from Harry W. Bass of Dallas and Joseph R. Lasser of New York. The material

acquired mostly comprised original correspondence among the principal authorities on United States Large Cents who, during the first half of this century, established many of the die varieties and pedigrees accepted today. The published works of these authorities, namely Howard R. Newcomb, George H. Clapp, William H. Sheldon, and Homer K. Downing, have become the standard references on the subject. In addition to correspondence of the authors just mentioned, there were letters to and from Henry Clay Hines of Newark, N.J., who together with Clapp and Newcomb is considered as one of the "Big Three" of Large Cent collecting. Inventories of the Large Cent collections of B. Max Mehl, Homer Downing, James T. Clark, Hines, and Oscar J. Pearl were among the items acquired.

In 1991, the heirs of Virgil M. Brand donated to the ANS Library the entire manuscript inventory of the renowned Brand collection, amassed during the period 1889 to 1926. The Brand ledgers consist of thirty-two folio volumes, which include individual listings of more than 150,000 acquisitions comprising in excess of 350,000 coins, medals, and tokens.

In 1992 the Library's manuscript and rare book holdings were considerably enriched by several gifts. Then ANS President R. Henry Norweb, Jr., donated five manuscript ledgers in which are recorded the contents of the renowned Norweb collection. There are 16,999 items listed in the ledgers, reflecting the collection's strengths in the areas of United States, Canadian, Latin American, and English coins. Thanks to an extraordinary team effort led by ANS member Anthony Terranova and joined by ANS Councillors Harry W. Bass, Joseph R. Lasser, and Donald G. Partrick, the Library received the funds needed to purchase "The New Netherlands Coin Company Archives" at the George Kolbe auction sale of December 8, 1992. This extremely important acquisition included bid books, invoices, correspondence, inventories, and other papers pertaining to the sales held by the New Netherlands Coin Company from 1943 until 1976. Through the generosity of P. Scott Rubin of Lawrenceville, New Jersey, the library also received a manuscript ledger of the New Netherlands Coin Company in which coin and currency purchases for the period 1940 to 1946 are listed.

From Harvey, Norman, and Lawrence Stack we received photocopies of the personal papers of Charles E. Barber. The papers include correspondence and drawings from fifteen different countries to Charles

E. Barber relative to the making of dies and coins for these nations. The gift also includes copies of Barber's personal notebook describing U.S. coins in his collection and a notebook on U.S. medals which he possessed and on which he worked.

In 1993, I had the pleasure of organizing the David M. Bullowa Memorial Lecture, which was entitled "Goltzius, Patin, and Vaillant, 200 Years of Numismatic Splendour." Those who attended the lecture heard Dr. Christian Dekesel of Ghent, Belgium, offer an informative and well-documented presentation on the numismatic publications of Hubert Goltzius (1526-1583), Charles Patin (1633-1693), and Jean Foy-Vaillant (1632-1706). I first met Christian Dekesel two years earlier at the International Numismatic Congress held in Brussels. I'm sure that those in this room are very familiar with his bibliographies of sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and now eighteenth-century numismatic works. During this period the library's collection of antiquarian works was enhanced by a series of donations from Jonathan Kagan. Among the donated volumes were works by Joannes Huttichius, Nils Keder, J. F. Barbadica, Guillaume du Choul, and Pietro Borghesi.

There is a humorous sidelight to that Bullowa Lecture experience. After my wife Rosa and I picked up Dekesel at JFK Airport, we were chatting amicably in our car en route to his hotel. At one point during the ride, my then six-year-old son, Geoff, who was also with us, got my attention. He had been staring at Dekesel, who had an imposing beard, and suddenly said to me, "Hey Dad, who is this guy anyway." Christian was quite amused and, in subsequent correspondence between the two of us, he would add, "Tell your son that 'That Guy' says hello."

Of course, the Society's Bullowa Lecture honors David Marks Bullowa, an ardent collector of both coins and numismatic books. Indeed, the books from his library were donated to the Society when Richard Breaden was Librarian. One of Bullowa's articles, "The Importance of Numismatic Books," bears testimony to his respect for books and the information which they contain. David's generosity to the Society and its Library has been continued by his widow, Catherine E. Bullowa-Moore, who made possible the Bullowa Lecture series.

In 1994, the sale of Armand Champa's numismatic library by the auction firm of Bowers & Merena provided the opportunity to acquire rare books and unique source materials seldom seen on the market,

resulting in a very successful year for the Library's acquisitions program. Primarily through the generosity of the Harry Bass Foundation, but also with the support of Joseph Lasser, Alan Lovejoy, and David Hedin, the library was able to participate in the Champa sales. In the public sales held, the library acquired a fine selection of manuscripts, letters, auction catalogues, counterfeit detectors, and rare nineteenth-century pamphlets and monographs.

These counterfeit detectors enhanced the library's already strong holdings, most of which came from the library of William H. Dillistin, who wrote the definitive ANS monograph on the subject in 1949. Perhaps the earliest variety of this type of publication was issued as a broadside in 1805, by the Boston newspaper publisher Gilbert and Dean. However, true banknote reporters and counterfeit detectors made their appearance around 1826. The Champa sales also provided the opportunity to acquire the extremely rare *Register of Issues of Confederate States Treasury Notes*, by Raphael Prosper Thian. It is essentially a list of the serial numbers of most Confederate notes, along with the names of the two individuals who signed each note. During the period 1867 to 1881, Thian sifted through the records of the Confederate Treasury Department which were stored in the Rebel Archives Bureau in Washington. He had planned to produce a multi-volume work on the Confederate currency but it never came to be. However, the *Register* was published and survives in only five copies, of which the ANS Library has one.

Among the unique items acquired in the Champa sales, was the personal diary of Joseph J. Mickley, who figures prominently among this country's nineteenth-century coin collectors. Mickley was involved in trades with the United States Mint, and purchased old dies from the Mint from which he prepared restrikes. He was also the first president of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia. The diary, which covers the period 1866 to 1869, provides an excellent record of Mickley's numismatic activities. Yet another unique acquisition was the confidential "blacklist" of the Philadelphia coin dealer Henry Chapman. Arranged alphabetically on 72 ledger sheets are the names of those whom Chapman refers to as the "List of Men Reported Bad". The period covered by the ledger is 1904-1919.

Another Champa sale item came to the Library as a generous donation from Mr. Anthony Terranova of New York. It is the manuscript

notebook of James A. Bolen, in which are described 23 of the medal dies cut by Bolen. This manuscript, dating from circa 1866, was the source of the listings contributed by Bolen to Volumes 1 and 3 of the *American Journal of Numismatics*.

To summarize the Champa sales, when all the bidding had ceased, more than a hundred items were acquired by the Library.

From 1997 until 1999, the library staff worked closely with Gaylord Information Systems of Syracuse, N.Y., and W.L. Hill Consulting, Dallas, Texas, in converting existing card catalog records to a machine-readable format. Upon completion of the conversion project, some 140,000 records, representing the entire cataloged library collection of books, periodicals, and auctions had been converted to MARC tagged records. Those records and any added since the conversion project are now available to those who access the Library catalog using the Internet. The conversion project would not have been possible without the support of Harry W. Bass, Jr., who had passed away in April of 1998, and the Harry W. Bass Foundation.

Although the staff of the Society knew that a new location had been under consideration since 1994, the prospect of moving became a reality in 1998 when the building at 140 William Street was purchased. There ensued a challenging time for all staff. The Library continued to service the public, respond to inquiries, and acquire new publications. In some cases, new acquisitions were barely unpacked before they had to be repacked for transport to the new location. At this time the Garrett Numismatic Archives were acquired. Thanks to the efforts of David and Susan Tripp, these archives were donated to the ANS Library by The Johns Hopkins University. The Tripps had also been instrumental in directing the Virgil Brand Archives to the Society.

T. Harrison Garrett, whose family managed the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, began collecting coins while a student at Princeton in the mid-1860s. He and his two sons, Robert and John Work, formed the Garrett collection. The archives span the period from the 1870s when T. Harrison Garrett began the collection, through the early 1940s.

In the Kolbe sale of Part Four of the Harry W. Bass, Jr., numismatic library, held in 2000, several items of great interest were acquired for the library through the generosity of ANS Councillor and Chairman of the Library Committee, John W. Adams and ANS Fellow, George

F. Kolbe. Among these were Ed and Kenneth Lee's unique notebook on California fractional gold coins, and the extremely rare typewritten inventory of the Waldo Newcomer collection of American Colonial coins, prepared by B. Max Mehl. That same year, Library Committee member E. Harrington Manville presented two very rare British journals to the library. These were *The Numismatic Quarterly*, published at Bury St. Edmunds in 1881, and *The Numismatist*, published at Accrington, Lancashire, 1889-1890. The Library now has complete runs of both these short-lived periodicals.

The year 2002 also saw the acquisition of the John S. Davenport Numismatic Archives. Along with original typescripts and page proofs of Davenport's works, the archive included a considerable correspondence between Davenport and many of the leading numismatists both in the United States and abroad during the latter half of the past century.

Another archive acquired, which came as a generous donation from the estate of Mrs. Henrietta Chapman Judson, consisted of a substantial quantity of the correspondence and other papers of the coin auction firm run by Henry and Samuel Hudson Chapman, which began operations in 1878. I know for a fact that Len Augsburger has already made good use of this archive.

The Society's annual meeting of 2003 was the first held in the new building at Fulton and William Streets. Although the Library was not completely installed at the time of the meeting, it would soon be housed on the fifth and sixth floors of the building. By the end of the year great progress had been made and the new library was ready for dedication. The dedication was held on December 2, in the main hall of the new building, and the Library was named in honor of Harry W. Bass, Jr. On behalf of the Foundation, Harry's widow, Doris Bass presented the Society with a check in the amount of \$400,000.00. As you can see, the generosity of Harry Bass himself and the Bass Foundation was considerable. During the Bass years, most of the library's advances, whether in the areas of computerization, physical plant, or significant acquisitions, were made possible through Harry's generous support. His concern for the library, its staff, and its collection was extraordinary.

In looking back over my career as Librarian at the ANS, I have come to realize that any success I may have had was largely the result of the

generosity shown to the Library by a long line of thoughtful donors, whose donations consisted not only of money and rare volumes, but of their time. Les Elam had it right: when reflecting on Harry Fowler's years as ANS president and Fowler's successful development campaign, Les noted that, in addition to financial support, Fowler had given the ANS "the gift of time."

I have mentioned some of those whose support was received mostly during the Audubon Terrace years. However, the generosity continued after the Society's move to Fulton and William Streets. An active Library Committee, chaired by John W. Adams, worked extremely hard at raising funds for a Library Chair, which the Council had approved at its October 2002 meeting. Under John's leadership, the Committee solicited donations from major coin and book dealers and the specialized organizations within the numismatic hobby. Naming opportunities were also offered and the number of those who stepped forward to lend their support was very gratifying. I cannot mention them all, but the Harry W. Bass Foundation, John W. Adams, Daniel Hamelberg, the members of John J. Ford's family, George Kolbe, Joseph Lasser, Richard Margolis, Arthur Houghton, Peter Weiss, and Catherine Bullowa were among those who donated to have reading areas, book rooms, office areas, and library sections named.

An earlier ANA Convention, held in Pittsburgh in 2004, was the scene of a very successful benefit auction to endow the Library Chair, held in Tambellini's Restaurant. John Adams was a great master of ceremonies, George Kolbe donated his time and services to call the sale, Wayne Homren was our host in Pittsburgh and guided us in securing the auction site, and Denis Loring called the auction, entertaining all while coaxing bidders to part with their money. Another benefit auction held in conjunction with the 2006 ANS Gala and New York International Show, was also very successful due to the many who donated lots and those such as John Adams, George Kolbe, Herb Kreindler, Rick Witschonke, Victor England, and Rick Ponterio, who gave of their time or services.

During this period, Dan Hamelberg also initiated an exciting project from which the Library would benefit. He undertook the production of a series of facsimile editions of rarities in the Library collection. The first item in the series was an early auction broadside. It is the auction

held in 1828 and conducted by George Nichols, consisting of the Estate of Benjamin Watkins, an extremely rare item and the first listing in E. J. Attinelli's *Numisgraphics . . .*, published in 1876. I know that as I speak, Dan is exploring possibilities for future items in the facsimile series.

Along with the gifts already mentioned, many private numismatic libraries were donated to the ANS Library during my years as Librarian. These included the libraries of Daniel Friedenberg, former Curator of Coins and Medals at the Jewish Museum; former ANS President Harry W. Fowler; Dr. Pierre Bastien; George C. Miles; Charles K. Panish; Kenneth MacKenzie; Herman Miller; Charles A. Hersh; former Councilor Allen Lovejoy; Dexter Seymour; and Herbert J. Erlanger.

The cataloging of these collections, individual gifts, and the thousands of articles found in the journals received by the Library was carried out by a series of extremely competent Assistant Librarians, whose names are Margaret D'Ambrosio, Kay Brooks, Carlene Stober, Grace Lin, Tamara Fultz, Barbara Bonous-Smit, and Oleg Medvedev. You can now enjoy the fruits of their labors whenever you access the Library's holdings online. Although not officially an Assistant Librarian, I would also have to acknowledge Normand Pepin for his assistance, mostly voluntary. He was especially helpful during the move from Audubon Terrace to Fulton Street.

There is an awful lot of talk these days about greed run rampant, self-indulgence, and exploitation. I'm well aware that it exists, but I consider myself fortunate in having had the chance, during my years as ANS Librarian, to have worked with and met a great number of people who proved to be competent, thoughtful, considerate, and generous.

Comment: The Mint Courtyard

Pete Smith

In Joel Orosz's contribution, "The Second Mint and the Casket," to *The Asylum* (Volume 28, No. 2), after including an 1831 description of the second United States Mint, he stated, "No known illustration of the second Mint, for example, offers a hint that it incorporated a large courtyard in the center of the structure." It would have been more accurate to state there was no illustration known to him.

Three classic articles on money were published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1861 and 1862. These include "Making Money: The Assay Office, New York," "Making Money: The Mint at Philadelphia," and "Making Money: The American Bank Note Company." It was the second article that focused on the second Mint. The article included fourteen line drawings of Mint facilities and equipment. On the second page is an illustration of the Mint courtyard. Although Joel is an excellent researcher, this is something he missed.

The three articles from *Harper's* were republished in *Collecting Coins and Making Money: A Peek at the 19th Century* by Bowers and Merena Galleries in 1996. In the introduction, Q. David Bowers stated, "'Making Money: The Mint at Philadelphia' is a true numismatic literary gem, and over the years I have referred to it many times. The scenery alone is worth the trip—the pictures are outstanding and have been widely reproduced in many places, including our own catalogs."

More recently the Mint courtyard was included in *History of the United States Mint and its Coinage* by David W. Lange (2005). Below the illustration on page 30 is the caption, "The Second U.S. Mint was designed with a courtyard to allow sunlight to illuminate the space inside (From Harper's Magazine)."

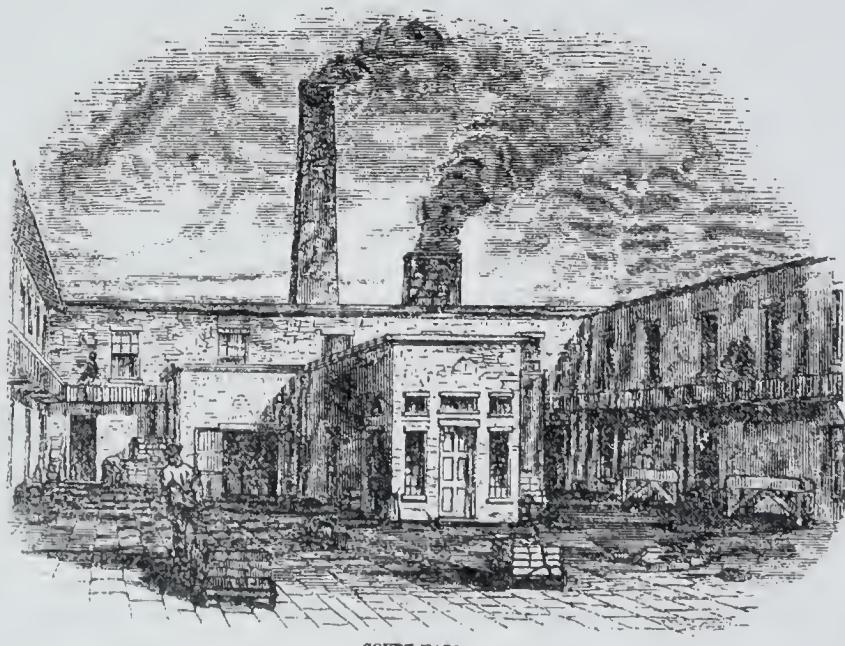
The author of the original articles was Waldo Abbott. I included his name in my original list of subjects when I was doing research for

American Numismatic Biographies. I was unable to find anything more. I have not found any other work by him on numismatics and nothing else in *Harper's*. I will make the bold statement that he wrote nothing else that is known to me.

The illustrations in *Harper's* are unsigned. These are typical of illustrations used by authors George Evans and A. M. Smith in their books on the Mint. During this era such illustrations were not copied directly but were more likely to be redrawn. Some of the later illustrations were signed by an artist or company.

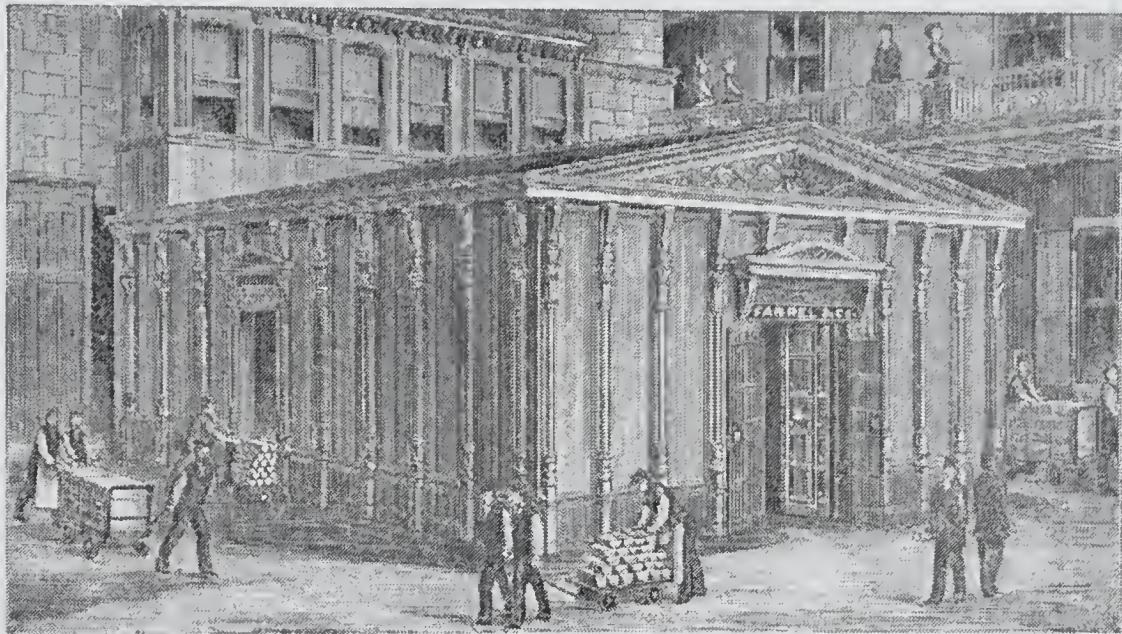
At one time I attempted to make some sense of the nineteenth-century illustrations. I doubt if a typical artist sat down and drew the illustrations from observation. I suspect that illustrations of machinery used drafting skills more than artistic skills. Some may have been provided by the manufacturers of the machinery. I also suspect that views of rooms and buildings were based on photographs.

Now that Joel Orosz and Len Augsburger have wrapped up their book on the first Mint, perhaps they will take on these illustrations of the second Mint. I believe much remains to be learned.



Courtyard of the second Mint, from *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (1861).

[Editor's note: As a supplement to Pete Smith's correction, Joel Orosz forwarded another image of the second Mint's courtyard, brought to his attention by Q. David Bowers:]



Steel Vault for the Storage of Bullion, Designed and Manufactured by FARRELL & CO., Philadelphia.

Courtyard of second Mint with steel vault built in the 1880s for bullion. From Evans, *Illustrated History of the United States Mint* (Philadelphia, 1892), p. 1.

Answers to the Numismatic Quarterly Quiz (see p. 79): 1) genuine 1861-O half dollars; 2) the Peace Maker; 3) George III and Charles III; 4) 1941: the coinage was Philippine; 5) 1856-1858 flying eagles; 6) overprint currency was not used until six months later during the war; 7) coins of the 1915 Panama-Pacific Expo; 8) Canadian currency in 1954: the Queen's hair was quickly re-engraved; 9) Christian Gobrecht; 10) Alexander Hamilton; 11) it is referred to as "hell money"; 12) Mark Hoffman.

The NBS Symposium, 2010

The NBS Symposium, held on August 12 at the ANA 2010 Convention, enjoyed a full house. John W. Adams spoke on the subject of his newly released book, co-authored by Fernando Chao (h)—*The Medallic Portraits of Admiral Vernon: Medals Sometimes Lie*. A copy of the book was signed by those in attendance and later auctioned at the regular NBS meeting for the tidy sum of \$5000.

In a PowerPoint presentation replete with 55 slides, Adams attempted to explain the powerful allure of these seemingly modest medals. No less than fifteen authors have analyzed the subject, including the likes of Edward Hawkins, C. Wyllis Betts, and the Marquess of Milford Haven. The attraction, per Adams, begins with the complexity of the corpus of medals that is enhanced, in turn, by the history of the events commemorated, the range of metals used, an even broader range of present day patinas and the widely varying skills of the engravers. Regarding the latter, the list of aesthetic triumphs is far shorter than the list of errors, some of which verge on the comic.

Attribution of varieties, using the earlier texts, has been difficult owing to the need to use words to describe small differences. This shortcoming is overcome in *Medallic Portraits* through the use of high-quality images for each variety and this in turn permits separate designations for obverse and reverse.

A spirited question and answer period extended the Symposium well past the appointed hour.

The NBS Annual Meeting, Boston, August 2010

For the first three decades of its existence, the Numismatic Bibliomania Society has held annual meetings characterized by two inexorable givens: the proceedings would be as lively as the settings would be banal. Veterans of these convocations fondly recall dozens of conversations enlivened by everything from authoritative presentations to exchanges of zingers, but as for the venues, one sterile convention center meeting room, replete with beige carpeting and folding room dividers, blurs imperceptibly into another. The NBS annual meeting of 2010 was just as animated as ever, but Boston's host site shattered every precedent for meeting room anonymity.

The NBS annual meeting of 2010, you see, was not held within the Boston Convention Center, but rather a couple of blocks down the street, at the Massachusetts Historical Society. The stately edifice on Boylston Street houses an extraordinary institution, not only the exemplar for all American historical societies, but virtually their mother church. When the MHS was founded, in 1791 by the Reverend Jeremy Belknap, it was the first in the field for all of North America. Its initial collecting interests, therefore, were not confined to Boston, or Massachusetts, but rather encompassed the entire nation. Moreover, they interpreted their "historical" franchise in the broadest possible sense, collecting physical objects as well as documents, including among them coins, medals, and tokens illustrative of American history. Happily, the MHS has preserved as well as it has collected, for it is one of the few historical societies to employ a professional Curator of Art and Numismatics.

The aforementioned curator, Anne Bentley, is familiar to NBSers for her authorial alliance with our past President, John W. Adams, the fruits of which include two superb references, one focusing on Comitia Americana medals, and the other explicating the Admiral Vernon medals. Their continuing collaboration redounded doubly to the benefit of

bibliomaniacs at the Boston ANA convention, for not only did they secure the mother of all meeting rooms for the NBS at the MHS, but they also jointly curated a splendid exhibition of medals from the Society's collection, to serve (as Q. David Bowers would say), as the lagniappe to a most memorable annual meeting.

Arriving at the ground floor entry to the Society, a gracious receptionist directed NBSers up an elegantly curving staircase, under the watchful oil-painted eyes of numerous colonial-era worthies. The second floor landing gave way to a pair of anterooms in which the medal exhibition was mounted. A separate, and exceedingly detailed, article would be necessary to even begin to do justice to the many delicacies on show, which included some few that were new even to NBS members boasting considerable credentials as medallic mavens.

Tearing away, with the utmost reluctance, from the medal exhibition, one then entered a sanctum guaranteed to take away the breath of any bibliophile. Found within was an imposing aggregation of leather-bound volumes that comprised the life's work of a nineteenth-century collector, housed in the stately walnut bookcases from his library, reconstructed here to serve as their home in perpetuity. The effect was absolutely magnificent, and if there is a more appropriate place for numismatic bibliophiles to congregate, it has yet to be revealed.

The NBS annual meeting itself proved worthy of this exceptional locale, featuring an impressive feat of pinch-hitting by the Club's Treasurer, David Sundman. Neither President Dan Hamelberg, nor Vice President Dan Freidus, was able to attend the Boston ANA, so David, as the last officer standing, took the chair. Although heretofore admired chiefly for his financial legerdemain, he won his spurs at running meetings by dispatching the agenda with equal parts of crisp efficiency and good humor. Much encouraging news was shared. The NBS is not only financially solvent, but even comfortable, with an exchequer in excess of \$30,000. This has, in the past, permitted the club to provide scholarships allowing young numismatists to attend the ANA Summer Seminar course on numismatic literature. A decision was taken to continue this tradition. Dues will remain at the bargain level of \$15, where they have been since the second Reagan administration. *The Asylum* continues to be under the capable editorship of David Yoon, although, as always, the Editor would greatly appreciate receiving quality submissions of any

length. The 2011 annual meeting will be held, as is customary, during the ANA annual convention in Chicago. A special plea was entered to mount competitive numismatic literature exhibitions at that convention (there were no such exhibits entered in Boston).

The NBS awards for 2009 went to richly deserving members. The NBS Writer's Award, for the best article published in *The Asylum*, was won by Len Augsburger, for his wide-ranging scholarship on "The 100 Greatest Works of United States Numismatic Literature". The Jack Collins Award, for the best article in *The Asylum* by a first-time author, went to Max Spiegel, for his article "A Visit to the Historic Mehl Building." Then came the revelation of the creation of a new award, the George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature. Marc Ricard, with the able assistance of his father, Charles, designed a superb medal to be awarded to all honorees.



David Sundman presenting George Kolbe with the first George Frederick Kolbe Award for Lifetime Achievement in Numismatic Literature.

Although the inception of this, the highest recognition the NBS can bestow, came as a surprise, the identity of the first two winners could not have come as a shock to anyone, for they were the medal's namesake, George Frederick Kolbe, and John W. Adams. Between the two of them, they have defined and refined the field, from a scattered group of eccentric enthusiasts to a well-organized host of scholars and, well, still-eccentric enthusiasts. Both deserve our gratitude and praise for their accomplishments, and our anticipatory thanks for all that they will yet do to advance our avocation.

The tradition of superb speakers at the annual meeting was nobly upheld by Frank Campbell, the American Numismatic Society's Librarian Emeritus. His presentation was a virtual tour-de-force through decades of numismatic history, refracted through the prism of the matchless collection that Frank built for the benefit of the ANS and its members (see pages 80 to 90 in this issue). NBSers chimed in, especially when Frank discussed the eccentricities of the Society's physical plant at the old Audubon Terrace location, which gave rise to such charming venues as the under-the-staircase-counterfeit-detectors-cubby. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Frank for his long years of devotion in the service of numismatic literature, a gift still paying us rich dividends today.

The meeting closed with the now sacrosanct tradition of the fund-raising auction. Grizzled NBSers will remember annual meetings from the 1980s and early 1990s when the late Armand Champa and our current President, Dan Hamelberg, organized passings of the hat (after first seeding said chapeau with generous donations), in order to rescue our club from its latest deficit. This hand-to-mouth (or more accurately, hat-to-mouth) existence ended in the mid-1990s, when the annual auction to benefit the NBS began. It consisted then, and it consists now, of members who generously donate books, catalogues, price lists, and ephemera from their libraries, which members then bid to several multiples of their current market value, all for the good of the club treasury.

This rampant overbidding is aided, abetted, and aggrandized by the NBS's own "gangsta" auctioneer, the Notorious B.R.A.D., a.k.a. Brad Karoleff. No written description of Brad's techniques could ever do justice to the spectacle, which must be observed to be fully appreciated, or for that matter, believed. Mr. Karoleff plucks his pigeons with me-



Brad Karoleff calling the NBS auction.

ticulous efficiency, leavened by snide asides and witty rejoinders to the faux-anguished cries of the members whom he has goaded into bidding \$500, for example, for a copy of the current *Guide Book* autographed by all attending the NBS meeting. NBS chief executives, both former (Adams), and current (Hamelberg), were pitted against each other in bidding wars, one of which culminated in the intrepid auctioneer phoning President Hamelberg—in his sick bed, no less—to extract an even more exorbitant bid for one of the choicest lots in the auction. Not since the great unpleasantness at Bunker Hill has Boston witnessed such a slaughter, but the NBS exchequer benefited mightily, when all of Brad's exertions were completed, to the tune of nearly \$15,000, a truly extraordinary case of virtuosity auctioneering for a good cause.

The 2010 NBS annual meeting in Boston was one for the ages: an unforgettable venue, an undeniably appropriate set of awards, and an unparalleled generosity among its membership. Nor can we forget that the proverbial good time was had by all. Boston has set the bar remarkably high for future conclaves. It will be our challenge—and our pleasure—to live up to that standard in the future.

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